

## Respondent Information Form and Questions

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

### 1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Title Mr ☐ Ms ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Dr ☒ Please tick as appropriate

Surname

HUXLEY

Forename

GEORGE L.

### 2. Postal Address

FORGE COTTAGE,  
CHURCH ENSTONE  
OXON

Postcode OX7 4NN Phone 01608-677-595 Email —

### 3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual



/

Group/Organisation

Please tick as appropriate

- (a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate ☒ Yes ☐ No

- (b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available ☒

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address ☒

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address ☒

- (c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate ☐ Yes ☐ No

- (d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate

☒ Yes

☐ No

NB Many of the questions concern

I would hope to hear from U.K. Government also.  
The United Kingdom, not Scotland only (e.g. stopping trains in Edinburgh, Caledonian sleepers, West coast main line) Why the usurpation?

## Consultation Questions

The answer boxes will expand as you type.

### Procuring rail passenger services

1. What are the merits of offering the ScotRail franchise as a dual focus franchise and what services should be covered by the economic rail element, and what by the social rail element?

Q1 comments: Dual focus has no merit at all. Railways are a public enterprise. Social and economic (i.e. profit-extracting) elements cannot be rationally distinguished.

2. What should be the length of the contract for future franchises, and what factors lead you to this view?

Q2 comments: All franchising should cease when present franchising terminates.

3. What risk support mechanism should be reflected within the franchise?

Q3 comments: None at all. Rail regulators are too feeble to curb excess profits.

4. What, if any, profit share mechanism should apply within the franchise?

Q4 comments: None at all, since there should be vertical integration of a public enterprise.

5. Under what terms should third parties be involved in the operation of passenger rail services?

Q5 comments: In no circumstances should there be third parties other than freight rail operators.

6. What is the best way to structure and incentivise the achievement of outcome measures whilst ensuring value for money?

Q6 comments: A public service provides value for money when socially responsible. What outcomes and for whom?

7. What level of performance bond and/or parent company guarantees are appropriate?

Q7 comments: No level is appropriate. TOCs are essentially extractive.

8. What sanctions should be used to ensure the franchisee fulfils its franchise commitments?

Q8 comments: Regulators are powerless to impose sanctions. Additional costs are simply passed on to the public, members of which are now required to pay socially inequitable, high fares, among the highest fares in Europe.

## Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

9. Under the franchise, should we incentivise good performance or only penalise poor performance?

Q9 comments: Current penalties and incentives are irrelevant in a vertically integrated railway.

10. Should the performance regime be aligned with actual routes or service groups, or should there be one system for the whole of Scotland?

Q10 comments: A properly operated railway is a coherent unit, having individual lines with connectivity attempts to cost separately is nonsense - account away.

11. How can we make the performance regime more aligned with passenger issues?

Q11 comments: What is meant by 'issues'? Failures to serve passengers well?

12. What should the balance be between journey times and performance?

Q12 comments: What can the question mean? Journey times depend upon track, motive power, signalling capacities? Trains should keep time according to a workable timetable.

13. Is a Service Quality Incentive Regime required? And if so should it cover all aspects of stations and service delivery, or just those being managed through the franchise?

Q13 comments: The question cannot be answered, until infrastructure and operations have a unified management.

14. What other mechanisms could be used for assessing train and station quality?

Q14 comments: Reintroduce responsible and conscientious station masters and station mistresses.

## Scottish train services

15. Can better use be made of existing train capacity, such as increasing the permitted standing time beyond the limit of 10 minutes or increasing the capacity limit? What is an acceptable limit for standing times on rail services?

Q15 comments: There is no acceptable limit. More rolling stock and longer platforms are needed. It is improper to charge full fares and then to compel passengers to stand.

16. Should the number of services making use of interchange stations (both rail to rail and rail to other modes) be increased to reduce the number of direct services? What would be the opportunities and challenges of this?

Q16 comments: There should be fewer interchanges. Compelling more passengers to change trains reduces connectivity and is socially deplorable - consider old persons with luggage and young mothers with children and disabled persons.

17. Should Government direct aspects of service provision such as frequency and journey time, or would these be better determined by the franchisee based on customer demand?

Q17 comments:

They should be determined by a Chief Operating Superintendent of a vertically integrated system.

18. What level of contract specification should we use for the next ScotRail franchise?

Q18 comments:

No contract is required, because franchising should cease.

19. How should the contract incentivise the franchisee to be innovative in the provision of services?

Q19 comments:

TOCs demonstrably do not respond to pleas, let alone incentives. They listen, it is all, to their shareholders.

Scottish rail fares

20. What should be the rationale for, and purpose of, our fares policy?

Q20 comments:

A fares policy should take account of the fact that road users do not pay their full track, accident, pollution, and historical capital costs of road infrastructure and operations.

21. What fares should be regulated by government and what should be set on a commercial basis? Do your recommendations change by geographic area (the Strathclyde area example), or by type of journey (for example suburban or intercity)?

Q21 comments:

Fares should be statutorily charged on a passenger-kilometer basis for all journeys.

22. How should we achieve a balance between the taxpayer subsidy and passenger revenue contributions in funding the Scottish rail network? At what rate should fares be increased, and how feasible would it be to apply higher increases to Sections of the network which have recently been enhanced?

Q22 comments:

Passengers should not be penalised for using an improved railway, since road users are not charged for particular improvements to roads.

23. What should the difference be between peak and off-peak fares? Will this help encourage people to switch to travelling in the off-peak?

Q23 comments:

There should be no difference. There should be enough rolling stock to cope with all-day operations. Would the Government impose congestion charges on roads at different times of the day?

## Scottish stations

24. How should we determine what rail stations are required and where, including whether a station should be closed?

Q24 comments: No stations should be closed. Would the Government contemplate closing minor roads? More stations should be reinstated.

25. What are the merits or issues that arise from a third party (such as a local authority or local business) being able to propose, promote and fund a station or service?

Q25 comments: Local interests should help in improving local stations. Services are the responsibility of a socially alert railway organisation.

26. Should only one organisation be responsible for the management and maintenance of stations? If this was the franchisee how should that responsibility be structured in terms of leasing, investment, and issues relating to residual capital value?

Q26 comments: Stations should be the responsibility of a unified railway organisation, with help, if needed, from local interests.

27. How can local communities be encouraged to support their local station?

Q27 comments: By charging road users their true road costs. By reintroduction of intelligent and locally aware station staff.

28. What categories of station should be designated and what facilities should be available at each category of station?

Q28 comments: Staffed stations. Unstaffed halts, these to be rare.

## Cross-border services

29. Should cross-border services continue to go north of Edinburgh? In operating alongside ScotRail services, how do cross-border services benefit passengers and taxpayers? And who should specify these services, the Department of Transport or the Scottish Ministers?

Q29 comments: Yes, through sleeper services and through services to Aberdeen (at least) are needed. Rail regulator and Rail Operating Sup't should require the services. Only the two Parliament could approve their removal.

30. Or should the cross-border services terminate at Edinburgh Waverley, allowing opportunities for Scottish connections? And if so, what additional benefits would accrue from having an Edinburgh Hub?

Q30 comments: Terminal costs would be increased by reversals and stoppages at Edinburgh. The notion of Hub is ineptly borrowed from airline parlance. Compare 'slot' for what is a 'path'. If there are more services through Edinburgh then more connexions are ready-made. Can the introverted isolationism of the S.N.P. be detected behind the question? Will charges of trains at Greta and B... be imposed?

## Rolling stock

31. What alternative strategies or mechanisms could be used to reduce the cost of the provision of rolling stock?

Q31 comments: Simplify the system of ordering contracts to build; and standardisation is needed. But that requires a coherently organised railway industry and system.

32. What facilities should be present on a train and to what extent should these facilities vary according to the route served?

Q32 comments: Most expresses need a restaurant or buffet car. All trains need lavatories and also access for the disabled.

## Passengers – information, security and services

33. How should we prioritise investment for mobile phone provision and / or Wi-Fi type high-bandwidth services?

Q33 comments: Not priorities to satisfy

34. How should we balance the need for additional seating capacity and retain the flexibility of a franchisee to offer first-class services if commercially viable?

Q34 comments: Build more standard class vehicles. Lengthen trains.

35. What issues and evidence should be considered prior to determining whether or not to ban the consumption of alcohol on trains?

Q35 comments: Determine the frequency of drunkenness. Ban drink from all but specified carriages. Let.

36. How can the provision of travel information for passengers be further improved? mobile telephones

Q36 comments: More publicity. More pocket timetables. More promotion of fares and simplification thereof. Advertise train times in local news papers.

## Caledonian Sleeper

37. Should we continue to specify sleeper services, or should this be a purely commercial matter for a train operating company?

Q37 comments: Continue the services and increase them. The services should serve not only London in England. Introduce Plymouth - Bristol - Aberdeen / Inverness sleeper.

38. Should the Caledonian Sleeper services be contracted for separately from the main ScotRail franchise? Or should it be an option for within the main ScotRail franchise?

No separate contract. Joint operation by vertically integrated English and Scottish railway systems is needed.

Q38 comments:

39. We would be interested in your views in the level and type of service that the Caledonian Sleeper Services should provide. Including:

- What is the appeal of the Caledonian Sleeper Service, and if there were more early and late trains would the appeal of the sleeper services change? No, it would not change.
- What is the value of sleeper services to Fort William, Inverness and Aberdeen and are these the correct destinations, for example would Oban provide better connectivity? There should also be a service to Oban. Split train at Crianlarich.
- What facilities should the sleeper services provide and would you pay more for better facilities? Take advice from 'Orient' express.

Q39 comments: (see above). Caledonian Sleeper a civilised way to travel. Provides much needed connectivity.

Environmental issues

40. What environmental key performance indicators should we consider for inclusion in the franchise agreement or the High Level Output Specification?

Q40 comments: To whom would the 'indicators' be directed?

A railway is not a production line. The notion of 'output' is misconceived. What does High Level mean, and who is to define it? What is 'key', and who defines keyness? It is 'high' time for railway administrators to stop using vacuous management talk and to start thinking independently. Scottish citizens with whom I have discussed these questions (1-40) have found most of them to be obscure or unintelligible.

With apologies for handwriting. Respondent is 79, but not yet senile.

## Letters to the Editor

*As with all material in this magazine, views expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of FoSCL committee members. We reserve the right to edit letters.*

### McNulty Report

The Chairman of FoSCL is to be congratulated upon his foresight in recognising the threats inherent in the McNulty report. McNulty was not permitted to question radically the extravagances enforced by franchising and 'vertical disintegration'. There can be little doubt that Plan B – a smaller railway – is again being contemplated at the Treasury and in the Department of Transport. Both bodies are committed to HS2, the cost of which in an epoch of prolonged economic distress, may entail disinvestments in many parts of the railway system outside the South-East. Meanwhile no frank assessment of the capital, track and operating costs of the road system is being undertaken.

In preparing a defence of the S&C an accurate estimate of track costs, heavy for freight and much lighter for passenger trains, is needed. Those on the S&C are likely to be much less than the 31.1p per passenger mile alleged for Regional lines. Attention should also be given to the contribution of the S&C to revenue of connecting routes (Transport Scotland may well be helpful in such calculations; DfT less so). Many of the closures in the 1960s and 1970s could have been stopped if the contributions of the secondary lines to the general system had been candidly and openly estimated, instead of being costed in isolation, as branches typically were. The S&C, being linked to main lines at the North and South, is vital to the connectivity of the system; there should be no revival of the notion that it is a secondary, disposable asset.

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